

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1971

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PLO LE IS NO UN MOPS
SUBJ: NORWEGIAN CONTINGENT IN LEBANON

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF ON APRIL 7, NORWEGIAN FIRST SECRETARY AND THE BRIGADIER COMMANDING NORWEGIAN CONTINGENT SAID FOLLOWING:
2. THERE WERE NOW A TOTAL OF 750 NORWEGIAN TROOPS IN LEBANON. THEY HAD COMPLETED THEIR DEPLOYMENT IN EASTERN SECTOR ON APRIL 7. THE SWEDES HAD LEFT EASTERN SECTOR AND TAKEN UP POSITIONS BETWEEN FRENCH AND IRANIAN.
3. THERE WAS A 50-MAN NORWEGIAN TRANSPORTATION UNIT STATIONED AT BEIRUT AIRPORT. THE REMAINING 700 SOLDIERS, CONSISTING OF THREE COMPANIES, WERE STATIONED IN THE EASTERN SECTOR ALONG THE LITANI: ONE COMPANY WAS AT
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KHARDALI BRIDGE; ONE COMPANY IN KAWKABA; AND ONE COMPANY IN MARJUYUN. THE FOUR NORWEGIAN HELICOPTERS WERE FLYING BETWEEN NAQURA AND JERUSALEM FOR THE MOMENT. A NORWEGIAN FIELD HOSPITAL UNIT WOULD ARRIVE NEXT WEEK.

4. THERE WAS NO TRUTH TO ASSERTION THAT CHRISTIAN MILITIA HAD DISARMED NORWEGIAN TROOPS ON APRIL 6 IN

A VACANT SCHOOL AT AT TAYYIBAH, SOUTH OF KHardali BRIDGE. WHAT HAD HAPPENED WAS THAT LOCAL HADDAD SUBORDINATE HAD GIVEN NORWEGIANS PERMISSION TO USE SCHOOL, BUT HADDAD WHEN HE HAD HEARD THIS HAD BECOME FURIOUS AND TOLD NORWEGIANS TO GET OUT. NORWEGIANS HAD VOLUNTARILY LEFT SCHOOL AND HAD FOUND SHELTER ELSEWHERE.

5. PALESTINIANS AROUND 1600 HOURS ON APRIL 6 HAD FIRED SMALL ARMS AND RIFLE GRENADES NEAR NORWEGIAN POSITIONS AT KAWKABA. IT WAS CLEAR THAT PALESTINIANS WERE TRYING TO AVOID ACTUALLY HITTING THE NORWEGIANS, ALTHOUGH ONE NORWEGIAN SOLDIER WAS VERY LIGHTLY WOUNDED IN LEG BY GRENADE FRAGMENT.

6. ABOVE FIRING RESULTED FROM DISPUTE OVER WHETHER UNIFIL HAD RIGHT TO BE IN KAWKABA. YASIR ARAFAT HAD TOLD UNIFIL IN BEIRUT THAT HE AGREED TO HAVE UNIFIL FORCES IN BEIRUT MOVE INTO KAWKABA. LOCAL PALESTINIAN COMMANDER, WHO HAD MET NORWEGIAN COMMANDER AT KHardali BRIDGE BEFORE THE SHOOTING, HAD DISPUTED UNIFIL'S RIGHT TO BE IN KAWKABA, HOWEVER.

7. DESPITE FIRING, NORWEGIANS HAD NOT LEFT KAWKABA AND WOULD NOT DO SO. NORWEGIANS WERE MEETING AGAIN ON APRIL 8 WITH LOCAL PALESTINIAN COMMANDER. TONE OF FIRST MEETING HAD BEEN GOOD, DESPITE SHOOTING.
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NORWEGIANS EXPECTED THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO IRON OUT PROBLEM IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, ALTHOUGH PALESTINIANS WOULD PROBABLY CONTINUE SOME HARASSING FIRE, NOT DESIGNED TO CAUSE CASUALTIES, IN THE INTERIM.
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